

TO THE
 CHURCH-ENGLAND
 ROMAN CATHOLICK

PROTESTANT

Difficulties

in which it is endeavored to be shown
 that it is their
 DUTY, PRINCIPLES and INTEREST
 To uphold the

British Empire

Tells

WHAT FACTS

LONDON

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THE

OF THE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND

ROMAN CATHOLICK

AND

PROTESTANT

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PRINCIPLES and INTEREST

to abolish the

General Terms

OF

Peace

RENTS PROVISION

LONDON

Printed in the Year 1704

THE P R E F A C E

READER,

NO matter who, but what; and yet if thou
wouldst know the Author, he is an En-
glish Man, and therefore obliged to this
Country, and the Laws that made him free.
That single Consideration were enough to command
this Undertaking; for 'tis to persuade his Country-
men to be delivered of the greatest Yoke a Nation can
ever suffer under; Penal Laws for Religion, I
mean. And now thou hast, both the who, and what;
thou art Wise and Good, thou art above my E-
nvy, and more my Flatteries; If not, I am in
Right to let 'um alone. Read, Think and
Judge. Liberty, English and Christian, is all that
is sought in the ensuing Discourse.

Adieu.

THE REFUGEE

CHAPTER

O man, who, but what; and what, but
 yourself, keep the mirror; he is in the
 glass Man, and therefore obliged to this
 Country, and the I want that much his face.
 That single Constitution were enough to command
 is Underneath; for it is in the heart of the Country
 to be delivered of the present look a Nation can
 it suffer, and: But I saw for Religion, I
 in. Had now thou had, but the who, and what;
 when are. Well and Good, then we know my E
 better, and more my Father; If not I am in
 Right to be now alone. Read, Think and
 big. I know, English and Christian, it is all that
 longer in the coming life.

Adieu

Good

A

GOOD ADVICE, &c.

PART. I.

I Must own, it is my Aversion at this time, to meddle with Publick matters, and yet my Duty to the Publick will not let me be Silent. They that move by Principles must not regard *Times* nor *Factions*, but what is *Just*, and what is *Honourable*; and that no man ought to Scruple, or no Time nor Interest to Contest.

The single Question I go upon, and which does immediately concern and exercise the Minds of the Thinking, as well as talking Men of this Kingdom, is, *Whether it be fit to repeal the Penal Laws and Tests, in matters of Religion, or no*? I take the affirmative of the question, and humbly submit my Reasons to every reasonable Conscience. I say reasonable, because That which knows not its own Duty, Principles and Interest, nor so; and That which is not willing to do so others as it could be done by, less deserves to be thought so.

Now there are three sorts of People that will find themselves concerned in this Question; *The Church of England, the Roman Catholick, and the Protestant Dissenter*, and these make up the whole Body of the Kingdom. If it appear to be their Duty, Principles and Interest, the question is gain'd, and no body is left to complain; and if I am mistaken, it is with so great an inclination to serve them all, that their good nature cannot but plead my Excuse, especially when they consider I am neither mov'd by Hopes nor Fears. Private Loss or Gain being farther from my thought, than I hope they are from a good Understanding.

I say, first, then it is the Duty of all of them, because they all profess that Religion which makes it their common duty to do it; *Christianity*, I mean: For no Christian ought to deprive any Man of his native Right for matters of Faith and Worship towards GOD, in the way that he thinks most agreeable

(6)
to the Will of GOD; because it is necessary to a Christian to believe that Faith is the Gift of GOD alone, and that He only is Lord of Conscience, and is able truly to enlighten, persuade, and establish it; and consequently that prejudging Men in their Persons or Estates, or depriving them of any Station in the Government, they might otherwise, in their turn, be capable to serve the Publick in, is contrary to the tenderness and equity of that Religion; which will yet further appear, if we consider that Christianity is the sole Religion of the World, that is built on the Principles of Love; which brought with it the greatest Evidences of Truth, Equally convincing our Understandings with its Light, and bearing down our Senses with its Miracles: which silenc'd the Oracles of the Heathens by the Divine Power present with it, and vanquish'd their hearts, that had left nothing else to conquer, leading Kings and Emperours with their Courts and Armies in triumph after the despised Cross of him, who was the holy and blessed Author of it.

It was he that laid not his Religion in worldly Empire, nor used the methods of worldly Princes to propagate it; as it came from Heaven, so that only should have the Honour of protecting and promoting it, His whole business to mankind, from first to last, was Love. 'Twas first Love in his Father to send him (as St. John teaches) *God so loved the World that he sent his Son*, &c. It was love in Jesus Christ to come on that Errand; that he, *who thought it no Robbery to be equal with God, should take the form of a Servant to adopt us Children, and make himself of no Reputation with the World; that he might make us of Reputation with GOD his Father.*

And he did not only come in much Love, but preach'd it and prest it both to Friends and Foes; *Love one another, Love Enemies, do good to them that hate you, forgive them that trespass against you; what you would that other Men should do unto you, do that unto them; by these things shall all Men know you are my Disciples; for I came not to destroy Men's Lives; no, not for Religion it self; for my Kingdom, Power, Force, Weapons, and Victory are not of this World.* In all this Love prevails. It was his great, his new, his last Commandment; of all his Disciples, the most persued by his beloved One.

that

but in his Bosom had learn'd his Heart, as his Disciple Do-
ctrine of Love in his Epistle calls us. As he liv'd in Love, so he died in Love, with us, and for
us, and that while we were rebellious to, say, he pray'd and
dy'd for them who put him to Death, showing us (says Sa-
vior) an Example that we also should follow his Steps. And
what are they? doubtless the Steps of Love, the Path he
rod: To do good to Mankind, Enemies as well as Friends,
that we may be like our heavenly Father, that causes his Sun
to shine, and his Rain to fall upon the Just and Unjust. This
must be the Apostles meaning, for the rest of his Passion was
Inimitable.

Now if this be the Doctrine of Christ, the Nature of Christiani-
ty, the Practice of the Primitive Church, that, like Adam was
Created in full Strength, Beauty and Wisdom, and so an Ex-
ample to succeeding Ages of Religion, and to which we lo-
often refer as our Original, with what Pretence to a Christi-
an Conscience can any one stickle to keep Imprisoning, Banish-
ing, Impoverishing, Hanging and Quartering men on foot
for Religions sake, but especially against such as by Crend-
professors of Christianity as well as themselves.

I know the Case is purhard by those that have the Laws on
their side, we do this to save our selves; but an harder Case
than Christ can never be put, whose Answer in his ought
to resolve theirs fully.

Christ is sent by his Father for the Salvation of the World.
He introduces and proves his Mission by Miracles, and the
great Authority of his Word and Doctrine. His Followers
fully satisfied who he was, whence he came, what he taught,
and how eminently confirm'd, grew impatient at Contradicti-
on; they could not bear the least Dissent; for when some of
the Samaritans refused to entertain their Lord, because they
thought he was going for Jerusalem, the place of their great-
est aversion; these Disciples were for having but the Word
from his Mouth, and they would, in imitation of Elijah, have
called for Fire from Heaven to have destroy'd them. But he
turned and rebuked them; and said, ye know not what manner of
Spirit ye are of, for the Son of Man is not come to Destroy Mens
Lives but to Save them. This Answer is to purpose, and
for all times, to be sure Christian ones; and the higher

the Pretensions of any Party are to Christianity; if the more
inexcusable if they practise the contrary: Would not Christ
themselves therein as refused them; and can we hurt our Neigh-
bours that not receiving us? He condemned that Spirit in his
Disciples, and that we uphold the same Spirit, and that by
Law too; which is condemned by his Gospel: This is killing
for GOD'S sake; expressly charg'd by Christ with impiety. They
shall think; says He to his Disciples; they do GOD good service
to kill you: who should think that? Why the Christian Persecu-
tors. Is it their Property to do so? yes; what shall one think
then of those Christians that profess in vain? *And so it is.*

The Jews were grievously punished of GOD, for that abo-
mination of sacrificing their Children to Moloch; but these
Laws, though they change the Object, they have not lessen'd
the Sin; for they offer up Man, Woman, and Child, and so they
say 'tis to GOD, no matter for that, since it makes their case
worse; for 'tis to imagine that so good, so just, so sensible, so
merciful a Being can take pleasure in so much cruelty. Well,
but if we must sacrifice Folks on the Road, what shall we do with
them? Take an answer at the Mouth of Truth and Wisdom.
Let the Tares and Wheat grow together till the Harvest; what's
that? He tells you, 'tis the end of the World; so that whatever
the Church of England is, 'tis certain Christianity is a Tolerati-
on, and his Doctrine is always in Fashion; what he was, he
is, and will be; he went not by Reasons of State, or Customs
of Countries; his Judgement was better built; who came to
give Law, and not to receive it, and 'tis a Light and Rule to
all times: *Will he that loves Father, or Mother, or Wife, or
Children, or House, or Lands better than Him, that is, his Do-
ctrine (of which this is the greater part) is unworthy of Him;*
and I fear no other Reason induces the Church of England to
decline it.

To confirm what has been said, who I design Brevity, let
me not lose another Passage very pregnant to our purpose;
when His Disciples had accomplish'd their first Mission, at their
return they gave Him the history of their Travels: Among
the rest, they tell Him of one they met with, that in His Name
cast out Devils; but because he would not follow with them,
they forbade him; here is at least a dissenting Christian, tho
a Believer; yet it seems not one of that closer Congregation;

we also see their Zeal and Sentence. But what says the Master, yet alive, and with them, the infallible Doctor, in whose Mouth was no Guile, who had not the Spirit by measure, and was the great Wisdom of God to his People, was he of the same mind, or did he leave them without rule in the Point? His Answer is this. *And Jesus said to them, forbid him not, for he that is not against us is for us.* The Prohibition is taken off, and their Judgement revers'd, and from his, to be sure, there lies no Appeal. For tho' a Power of Decision were allow'd to some one or more on Earth, in matters obscure and undetermined, yet in cases already adjudged by the Son of God himself, who had the Chair, and could not err, there can be no room for another Judge.

Now to apply it, I must first say, I had no such Disciples among those that were of the side of keeping up the Penal Laws, God knows, the disparity is but too unequal: But next, if they were all *Taxmen in Westminster-abbey*, and should be of the side of upholding the Penal Laws (which is the wrong side they were of before) I should beg their Pardon, if I were of their Masters mind, and objected his Wisdom to their Zeal, and his gentle Rule to their harsh and narrow Judgment. And I beseech the Church of England to consider, that no Presence can excuse her Dissent, and less her cross Practice to the Judgment of her Saviour. *Let Judgment that seems given and sealed for the Conduct of the Church on the like Occasions in succeeding times.* And 'tis pity any worldly thing should have place with her to divert her Obedience. Did Christ then come to save Men Lives, and not to destroy them? and should she (she that pretends to be a reformed Church) uphold those Laws that do destroy them? He, Alas! went to another Village instead of burning them, or theirs, for refusing him: And she forbids any, that belongs to any other, to lodge in hers, upon pain of losing Life or Estate; This may make her a *Samaritan* indeed; but not the good One, whose Example would have taught her, instead of these sharp and ruder Remedies, to have poured the Oyle of Peace and Gladness into those Chops and Wounds that Time and Heats of all Hands had made in every Religious Party of Men. Nor does she lose any thing by repealing those Laws, but the Power of Persecuting; and a good Church would never have the Temptation.

Come

Come some body must begin to forgive, let her not leave that honour to another, nor draw upon her self the Guilt and Mischief of refusing it. She pretends to fear the Strokes of the Romanists; but I would fain know of her, if following their Example will convert them, or secure her? Does she hope to keep them out by the Weapons that have failed in her hands, or can she honourably censure Persecution in them, and yet use it her self?

But she is extremely scandal'd and scared at the Severity upon Protestants in France. 'Tis certainly very ill; but do not the Laws she is so fond of point at the same Work, *Conformity or Ruin*. And don't we know that in some places, and upon some Parties her Magistrates have plow'd as deep furrows, especially within these six and twenty Years. *Husbands separated from their Wives, Parents from their Children, the Widows Bed, and the Orphans Milk made a Prize for Religion, houses stripped, Barns and Fields sweep clean, Prisons crowded without regard to Sex or Age, and some of both sorts dangin'd to Death, and all for Religion*. If she says they were *perish Men, Biggots, or mov'd by private Interest*, she still made the Laws, and says no more for her self than the French say for their King, which yet she refuses to take for an Answer. Perhaps I could paralel some of the severest Passages in that Kingdom out of the Actions of some Members of the Church of England in cool Blood; that are even yet for continuing the Penal Laws upon their plunder'd Neighbors; so that this Reflection of hers upon France, is more popular than just from her. But I beseech her to look upon a Country four times bigger than France: *Germany* I mean, and she will there see both Religions practis'd with great Ease and Amity, yet of this we must not hear one Word: I hope it is not for fear of imitating it. However 'tis disingenious to object the Mischiefs of Popery to a general Ease, when we see it is the way to prevent them. This is but in the name of Popery to keep all to her self, as well from Protestant Dissenters, as Roman Catholicks. How Christian, how equal, how safe, that narrow Method is, becomes her well to consider, and me thinks she ought not to be long about it.

I know she flatters her self and others to believe, she is a Bulwork against Popery; and with that, without any further

Security

security to other Protestants, wipes her mouth of all old scores, and makes her present Court for Assistance. But when that word *Bulwork* is examined, I fear it appears to mean no more than this, *That she would keep out Popery, for that reason for which she apprehends Popery would turn her out, viz. Temporal Interest.* But may I without Offence, ask her, when she kept Persecution out? Or if she keeps out Popery for any holies sake but her own? Nay, if it be not to hold the power she has in her hands, that she would frighten other Parties, (now she has done her worst) with what mischief Popery would do them when it has power. But to speak freely, can she be a Bulwork in the Case, that has been bringing the worst part of Popery in these six and twenty Years, if Persecution be to as she says it is? This would be called *Casting to the World in others.* But I hear *she begins to see her fault, is heartily sorry for it, and promises to do so no more.* And why may not Popery be as wise, that has also burnt her Fingers with the same work? Their praying for ease by *Law* looks as if they chose, That rather than *Power* for Security, and if so, why may not the Papists Live, as well as she Reign? I am none of their Advocate, I am no Papist, but I would be just and merciful too. However, I must tell her, that keeping the Laws on foot, by which she did the mischief, is none of the plainest Evidences of her Repentance: They that can believe it, have little reason to quarrel the unaccountableness of Transubstantiation. It is unjust in Popery to invade her Privileges, and can it be just in her to provoke it, by denying a Christian Liberty? or can she expect what she will not give? or not do as she would be done by, because she fears others will not observe the same Rule to her? Is not this *doing Evil that Good may come of it*, and that uncertain too, against an express Command as well as common Charity? But to speak freely, whether we regard the Circumstances of the King, the Relation of his Children, the inequality of the Number and Strength of those of each of their Communions, we must conclude, that the Aversion of the Church of England to this entreated Liberty, cannot reasonably be thought to come from the fear she has of the prevalence of Popery, but the loss of that Power the Law gives her to domineer over all Dissenters. And is not this a *Rare Motive* for a Christian Church

Church to continue Penal Laws for Religion? If her Piety be not able to maintain her upon equal terms, she thinks her having so much the whip hand and start of all others, should satisfy her Ambition, and quiet her Fears; for 'tis possible for her to keep the Churches if the Laws were abolished: all the difference is, she could not force: She might persuade and convince what she could: And pray, is not that enough for a true Church, without *Goals, Whips, Halters and Gibbets*? O what Corruption is this that has prevail'd over Men of such Pretensions to Light and Conscience? that they do not, or will not, see nor feel their own Principles one remove from themselves; but sacrifice the noblest part of the Reformation to Ambition, and compel Men to truckle their tender Consciences to the Grandure and Dominion of their Doctots.

But because the Sons of the Church of England keep at this time, such a stir in her favour, and fix her excellency in her opposition to Popery, it is worth while to consider a little further. If really the most feared and disagreeable part of Popery in her own opinion, does not belong to her, and if it does, should we not be in a fine condition, to be in love with our Fetters, and to court our Misery?

That part of Popery which the Church of England with most success objects against, is her *Violence*. This is that she can only pretend to fear: Her Doctrine she partly professes or thinks she can easily refuse. She does not think her Doctots *Conjurors* for their *Transubstantiation*, or dangerous to the State for their *Beads*, or their *Purgatory*. But forcing others to their Faith, or ruining them for refusing it, is the terrible thing we are taught by her to apprehend. Now granting this to be the case, in reference to the Roman Religion; where it is in the Chair: I ask, if the Church of England, with her better Doctrines, has not been guilty of this Impiety, and for that cause more blameable than the Church she opposes so much? If we look into her Acts of State, we find them many, and bitter, against all sorts of Dissenters. There is nigh twenty Laws made, and yet in force, to constrain Conformity, and they have been executed too, as far, and as often as she thought it fit for her Interest to let them. Some have been hang'd, many banish'd, more imprison'd, and some to Death; and a bundance impoverish'd; and all this merely for Religion: Tho

by a base and barbarous use of words, it has been called *Treason, Sedition, Riots and Riots*; the worst of aggravations, since they are not contented to make People unhappy for their Dissent; but rob them of all they had left, *their Innocency*. This has been her State-Craft, to coin Guilt, and make men dangerous, to have her ends upon them. But that way of Palliating Persecution, by rendering a thing that it is not, and punishing Men for Crimes they never committed, show but little Conscience in the Projectors. The Church of England cries out against Transubstantiation, because of the invisibility of the Change. She don't see Christ there, and therefore he is not there, and her Sons do the same thing. For tho all the tokens of a Riot are as invisible in a Dissenters Meeting, as Christ in the Transubstantiation, yet it must be a Riot without any more to do: The English of which is, 'tis a Riot to pray to GOD in the humblest and peaceablest manner in a Conventicle.

I know it is said, *The Blood-shed in the foregoing Reign, and the plots of the Papists against Queen Elizabeth, drew these Laws from the Church of England*. But this was no Reason why she should do ill because they had done so: Besides, it may be answered, that that Religion having so long intermixt itself with worldly power, it gave way to take the revenges of it. And certainly the great Men of the Church of England endeavouring to intercept Queen Mary, by proclaiming the Lady Jane Gray, and the Apprehension the Papists had of the better Title of Mary Queen of Scots, together with a long Possession, were scurvy Temptations to kindle ill Designs against that extraordinary Queen. But tho nothing can excuse and less justify those cruel Proceedings; yet if there were any reason for the Laws, it is plainly removed; for the Interests are joyn'd, and have been since King James the first came to the Crown. However, 'tis certain there were Laws enough, or they might have had them, to punish all civil Enormities, without the necessity of making any against them as Papists. And so the Civil Government had stood upon its own Legs, and Vices only against it had been punishable by it. In short, it was the falsest Step that was made in all that great Queens Reign, and the most dishonourable to the Principles of the first Reformers, and therefore I know no better reason why it should

should be continued, than that which made the *Cardinal* in the History of the *Council of Trent* oppose the Reformation at *Rome*; That tho' it was true that they were in the wrong, yet the admitting of it *approved the judgement of their Enemies, and so good night to infallibility*. Let not this be the Practice of the Church of *England*, and the rather, because she does not pretend to it: But let her reflect, that she has lost her King from her Religion, and they that have got him, naturally hope for ease for theirs by him, that 'tis the end they labour for, and the great use they have for him, and I would fain wonder that she never saw it before; but whether she did or no, why should she begrudge it, at least refuse it now? Since 'tis plain, that there is nothing we esteem dangerous in Popery that other Laws are not sufficient to secure us from: Have we not enough of them? let her think of more, and do the best she can to discover Plotters, punish Traitors, suppress the Seditions, and keep the Peace better than those we have can enable us to do: But for Gods sake, let us never direct Laws against Men for the cause of Religion, or punish them before they have otherwise done amiss. Let Mens Works, not their Opinions, turn the Edg of the Magistrates Sword against them, else 'tis Beheading them before they are Born.

By the Common Law of this Kingdom, there must be some *Real and Proper Overt Act* that proves Treason; some *Malice* that proves Sedition; and some *violent Action* that proves a Rout or Riot. If so, to call any sort of Religious Orders, the one, or Praying to God in a way out of fashion, the other, is preposterous, and punishing People for it, downright Murder, or Breach of the Peace, according to the true use of Words, and the old Law of *England*.

If the Church of *England* tears the growth of Popery, let her be true to the Religion she owns, and betake her self to Faith, rather than Force, by a pious, humble, and a good Example: To convince and persuade, which is the highest honour to any Church, and the greatest Victory over Men. I am for a National Church as well as she, so it be by consent, and not by constraint. But Coercive Churches have the same Principle, tho' not the same Interest. A Church, by Law established, is a State Church, and that is no Argument of Verity, unless the State that makes her so, be infallible; and because that will

not

not be asserted, the other can never oblige ^{the} Conscience, and consequently the Compulsion she uses, is unreasonable. This very Principle justifies the King of France, and the Inquisition. For Laws being equally of Force in all Countries where they are made, it must be as much Fault in the Church of England's Judgment to be a Protestant at Rome, or a Calvinist at Paris, as to be a Papist at London: Then where is Truth or Conscience but in the Laws of Countries! which renders her an Hobbiſt, notwithstanding her long and loud Clamours against the Leviathan.

I beg her, for the love of Christ, that she would think of these things, and not esteem me her Enemy for performing the part of so good a friend. Plain Dealing becomes that Character; no matter whether the Way be agreeable, so it be right: We are all to do our Duty, and leave the rest to God: He can best answer for our Obedience, that Commands it; and our Dependance upon his Word, will be our Security in our Conduct. What weight is it to a Church, that she is the Church by Law established, when no Humane Law can make a true Church? A true Church is of Christ making, and is by Gospel established. 'Tis a Reflection to a Church that would be thought true to stoop to Humane Law for her Establishment. I have been often scandal'd at that Expression from the Sons of the Church of England, especially those of the Robe, *What do you talk for? our Religion is by Law established.* as if that determin'd the Question of its Truth against all other Perswasions.

The Jews had this to say against our Saviour, *We have a Law, and by our Law He ought to die.* The Primitive Christians, and some of our first Reformers dyed as by Law established, if that would mend the matter; but does that make it lawful to a Christian conscience? we must ever demur to this plea. No greater Argument of a Churches Defection from Christianity than turning Persecutor. 'Tis true, the Scripture says, *The Earth shall help the woman*, but that was to save herself, not to destroy others: For 'tis the Token that's given by the Holy Ghost of a false Church, *That none must buy or sell in her Dominions that will not receive her Mark in their Forehead, or Right-hand.* That is by going to Church against conscience, or bribing lustily to stay at home.

Things

Things don't change, tho men do. Persecution is still the same, let the hand alter how so often; but the Sin may not. For doubtless it is greatest in those that make the highest claim to Reformation. For while they plead their own Light for doing so, they hereby endeavour to extinguish another Light that can't conceal it. What a Man can't do, it is not his Fault he don't do, nor should he be compell'd to do it, and as he is all be punished for not doing it. No Church can give Faith, and therefore can't force it; for what is constrain'd is not Relieved since Faith is in that sense free, and constraint gives no time to assent; If say, what I don't will it not I, and in what I don't I choose none of mine, and another can't save me, who should save him. So that this Method never obtains the end design'd, since it saves no body, because it Converts no body; it may breed Hypocrisie, but that is quite another thing than Salvation.

What then is the use of Penal Laws (only to show the Sincerity of them that Suffer, and Cruelty of those that make use of them). And all time tells us they have ever fail'd those that have lean'd upon them: They have always been loose at last. Besides, it is a most inaccountable obstinacy in the Church of England to stickle to uphold them, for after having made it a matter of Religion and Conscience to Address the late King in behalf of this, no think He should leave his Conscience behind him in Flinders; or when they waited on him to the Crown, that he should send it thither upon a Pilgrimage, a want of wit at best, pardon the censure. Could they Conscientiously oppose his Exclusion for his Religion and now his Religion because he will not leave it? Or can they reasonably maintain those Tests that were contrived to exclude him when Duke of York, while they endured none to hinder him from the Crown? I heartily beg the Church of England excuse, if I say I can't comprehend it. Perhaps the fault is mine, but sure I am the is extremely dark. How could she hope for this King without his Conscience? or conceive that his Honour or Conscience would let him leave the Members of his Communion under the lash of so many Destroying Laws? would she be so serv'd by a Prince of her own Religion, and she in the like Circumstances? She would not, if her talk will Dooms Day.

To object the Kings promise, when he came to the Crown against

against the repeal of the Penal Laws, shows not his insincerity, but her Uncharitableness, or that really she has a very weak place: For it is plain the King *first* declared his own Religion, and then *promised* to maintain hers; but was that to be without, or together with his own? His Words shows he intended that his own should *Live*, tho' other might *Reign*. I say again, it is not credible that a Prince of any Sincerity can refuse a being to his own Religion, when he continues another in its well being. This were to act upon *State* not *Conscience*, and to make more Conscience to uphold a Religion he cannot be of, *than of giving ease to one his Conscience obliges him to be of*. I cannot imagin how *this thought* could enter into any Head that had Brains, or heart that had Honesty. And to say true, they must be a sort of State Consciences, *Consciences as by Law Establish'd*, that can follow the Law against their Convictions.

But this is not all I have to observe from that objection: It implies too evidently, first, that she thinks her self *states*, if the Penal Laws be repeal'd; then by Law Established she must mean, *Established by those Penal Laws*. Secondly, that the King having promised to maintain her, as by Law established, *he ought not to endeavour their Repeal by which she is established*. I confess this is very close arguing, but then she must not take it ill, if all Men think her ill founded: for any thing must be so, that is established by destroying Laws? Laws, that *Time and Practice* have declared Enemies to *Property* and *Conscience*. O let her not hold by that Charter, nor Point thither for her Establishment and Defence, if she would be thought a Christian Church.

Plurarch had rather one should think there never was such a Man in the World, than that *Plurarch* was an ill Man. Shall the Church of England, that glories in a great Light, be more *concern'd* for her Power, than her Credit? To be, than to be that which she should be? I would say, far be it from her, for her own sake, and which is of much more moment, for the sake of the general Cause of Religion.

Let us see therefore if there be not another way of understanding those Words, more decent to the King, and more honourable for her, *viz.* that she is in the *National Chair*, has the Churches and Revenues, and is *Mother* of those that do not

adhere to any separate communion, and that the King has promised to maintain her in this Post from the Invasions of any other persuasion that would wrest these Priviledges out of her hands: this he promised formerly; this he has very particularly repeated in his gracious Declaration: But to ruin Men that would not Conform, while himself was so great a Dissenter, and came such, to her knowledge, to the Crown, can be no part of his Promise in the Opinion of common Sense and Charity. Is there no Difference to be observed between not turning her out, and destroying all others, not of her Communion: He will not turn her out, there's his Promise, and he has not done it, there's his Performance: Nor will he do it, I am confident, if she pleases. But there is no manner of necessity from this Engagement that all Parties else are to be confounded. Tho if it were so, 'tis ill Divinity to press such promises upon a Princes conscience, that can't be perform'd with a good One by Any Body.

Let her remember how often she has upbraided her Dissenters with this, *Render to Caesar the things that are Caesars*, whilst they have returned upon her t'other half of the Text, *and render unto GOD the things that are GOD's*. It happens now that GOD and Caesar are both of a mind, which perhaps does not always fall out, at least about the point in hand. Will she Dissent from both now? Her case, believe me, will be doubtful then. I beg her to be considerate. 'Tis the greatest time of Tryal she has met with since she was a Church. To acquit her self like a Member of Christs Universal One, let her keep nothing that voids her pretentions. The *Babylonish* Garment will undo her. Practices inconsistent with her Reformation will ruin her. The Martyrs Blood won the Day, and her Severity has almost lost it. They Suffered by Law, she makes Laws for Suffering. Is this an Imitation of their practice, so uphold the Weapons of their Destruction? I must tell her, 'tis being a Martyr for Persecution, and not by it. Another path then that the holy Ancients, and our humble Ancestors trod, and which will lead her to be deserted and contemned of every Body that counts it safer to follow the blessed Rule and practice of Christ, and his inspired Messengers, then her narrow and worldly Policies. But that which heightens the Reproach, is the offer of the Romanists themselves to make a perpetual civil Peace with her, and that she refuses

refuses, would the Martyrs have done this? surely no. Let her remember the first Argument honest old Fox advances against that Church, is the Church of *Englands* present Darling viz. Penal Laws for Religion; as she may see at the beginning of his first Volumn: Doubtless he was much in the right, which makes her extreamly in the wrong. Nothing, says the Prophet, must harm in Gods holy Mountain, and that's the Church says Fox, and therefore he says, Christs Church never persecutes. Leave then GOD with his own work, and Christ with his own Kingdom. As it is not of the World, let not the World touch it; no, *not to uphold it*, tho they that bear it should trip by the way. Remember *Uzza*, he would needs support the Ark when the Oxen stumbled; *but was struck dead for his pains*. The presumption is more than parralel: Christ promis'd *to be present with his Church to the end of the World*. He bid them *fear not*, and told them, *that sufficient was the day for the evil thereof*. How? with Penal Laws? no such matter; but his Divine Presence. Therefore it was, He call'd not for Legions to fight for Him, because his work needed it not: They that want them have an other sort of work to do: And 'tis too plain, that Empire, and not Religion, has been too much the business. But, O let it not be so any more! To be a *True Church* is better than to be a *National One*; especially as to uphold. *Press Vertue, Punish Vice, Dispence with Opinion; Perswade, but don't Impose*. Are there *Tares* in *Opinion*? let them alone; you heard *they are to grow with the Wheat till Harvest*, that is, *the end of the World*. Should they not be pluckt up before? no; and 'tis Angels work at last too. Christ that knew all Men, saw no Hand on Earth fit for that business: Let us not then usurp their Office. Besides, *we are to love enemies*; this is the great Law of our Religion: *why haten we them that hate us*? and if not Enemies, not Friends and Neighbours certainly.

The Apostle rejoiced *that Christ was preached out of envy*; so, I am sure we ought not to envy Christians the enjoyment of the liberty of their consciences. Christianity should be propagated by the Spirit of Christianity, and not by Violence or Persecution, for that's the Spirit of Antichristianity. For for fear of it, should we, of Christians, become Antichristians. Where is Faith in GOD? where is trust in Providence?

let us do our Duty; and leave the rest with Him; and not de-
 spoil that good may come of it; for that shows a distrust in GOD,
 and a confidence in our own invention for security. No rea-
 son of State can excuse our disobedience to His Rule; and we
 desert the Principles of our heavenly Master when we decline
 it. The question is about Conscience, about this we can none
 of us be too tender nor exemplary. 'Tis in right in doing that
 Christians can hope for Success; and for true Victory on-
 ly through Faith and Patience. But if to avoid what we fear,
 we contradict our Principles, we may justly apprehend *that*
GOD will desert us in an unlawfull way of maintaining them. Per-
 haps this may be GOD's time of trying all parties, what we will
 do; whether we will rely upon Him, or our own feeble pro-
 visions; Whether we will allow what we our selves in our
 turn have all of us desired; if not, may we not expect to suffer
 the thing we would inflict? for our Penal Laws cannot secure
 us from the turns of Providence, and less support us under
 them. Let us consider the true ground of the difficulty that is
 made, if it be not partial and light in Gods Scale; for to the
 tryal all things must come, and his Judgment is inevitable as
 well as infallible. Besides, if we have not tryed all other me-
 thods, we are inexcusable in being so tenacious for this. I do
 therefore, in all humility, beseech all sorts of Professors of
 Christianity in these Kingdoms, to abstract themselves from
 those Jealousies which worldly motives are apt to kindle in
 their Minds, and with an even and undisturbed Soul pursue
 their Christian Duty in this great Conjunction: Considering
the Race is not to the Swift, nor the Battle to the Strong, and that
 for all our Watchmen, 'tis God alone (at last) that keeps the
 City. Not that I would decline a fitting, but an unchristian
 Provision: For though the Foundation were never so true,
 yet if our Superstructure be Hay and Stubble (our own narrow
 Devices) the Fire will consume it, and our Labour will be
 worse than in vain. Let us not therefore *Sow what we would*
not Reap, because we must Reap what we Sow: And remember
 who told us, *what we measure to others shall be meted to*
again. Let us therefore do unto all Parties of men, as
 would be done unto by them in their turn of Power: Least our
 fear of their uncharitableness, should tempt us out of our Duty, and
 so draw upon our selves the mischiefs we are afraid of

and not de- Sacred Writ is full of this. in the Doctrine of both Testa-
 in GOD, ments; and as we profess to believe it, we are inexcusable
 No rea- if we do not practice it. Let the Spirit then of Christian Re-
 ; and we ligion prevail. Let our Policies give way to our Duty, and
 we declin- our Fears will be overcome of our Hopes, which will not
 e can none make us ashamed at the last and great Judgement: where, O
 doing that God! let us all appear with Comfort.

I could yet Enlarge upon this Subject; for nothing can be
 more fruitful. I could say, that a Church that *Denies* Infalli-
 bility, cannot *force*, because she cannot be *certain*; and so
Penal Laws (tho it were possible that they could be lawfull in
 others) in her, *would be Unjust*. That Scripture leaves Men
 to *conviction* and *Persuasion*. That the true Church-Weapons
 are *Light* and *Grace*; and her punishments, *censure* and *Ex-*
communication. That *Goales* and *Gibbets* are Inadiquated Me-
 thods for Conversion, and that they never *succeeded*. That this
forbids all further light to come into the World, and *limits*
 the Holy One, which in Scripture is made a great Sin. And
 lastly, that such ensnare their own Posterity that may be of an
 other mind, and forfit by it the estates they have so carefully
 transmitted to them. Thus far against Imposition. And a-
 gainst Compliance. I could say, that its to betray Gods So-
 verainty over Conscience; To deify Men; Gratifie pre-
 sumption; foil and extinguish truth in the mind; obey blind-
 fold; make over the Soul without Security; turn Hipocrite,
 and abundance more; each of which heads might well merit
 an whole chapter. But this having been well and seasonably
 consider'd elsewhere, I shall now proceed to the second part
 of this discourse, in which I will be as brief, and yet as full as I
 can.

PART II.

That 'tis the Principle of Men of Note of all Parties.

BUT what need is there of this, may some say, when
 Ball Parties profess to be of the same Judgment; That con-
 science ought not to be forced, nor Religion imposed upon men at
 their civil peril (I own they are all of that mind, or one time
 or other, and therefore that I may purge my self of any Ani-
 mosity.

most to the Doctrine of the Church of England; I will
 generously confess, the severe conduct I have argued against
 is not to be imputed to her Principles; but then here it
 be the greater, that in fact has so notoriously contradicted
 them. I know some other defenders will hardly allow this
 too; That the more candid give us their Silence or Confess-
 ion: For they tell us, 'tis not the church that has done it, which
 unless they mean, the Laws were not made a Church; and
 needs be false, since those that made and executed them
 were of her own Communion, and are that great body of
 Members that constitute her a Church; but by her making
 them off, 'tis but reasonable to conclude that she tacitly con-
 demns what she publicly disowns. One would think that
 should not be so hard to persuade her to quit them, in the way
 she made them; or to injoin her Sons to do it, if that language
 be to harm for her. This Story she must hear of some way, and
 I pray God she may endeavour to do her duty in it. She is not
 alone; for every Party in Power has too evidently laps'd into
 this Evil; tho' under the prevalency and persecution of ano-
 ther Interest they have ever writ against club Law for Religi-
 on. And to the end that I may do the Reformation Right, &
 the Principles of the church of England, Justice, I must say,
 that hardly one person of any note, dyed in the time of *Queen*
Mary, that did not pass sentence upon Persecution as Anti-
 christian, particularly *Latimer*, *Philpot*, *Bradford*, *Rogers*, very
 Eminent Reformers. The Apologies that were writ in those
 times, are of the same strain, as may be seen in *Jewel*, *Had-*
don, *Reynolds*, &c. and the Papists were with reason thought
 much in the wrong by those Primative Protestants, for the
 Persecution that they rais'd against them, for matters of pure
 Religion. But what need we go so far back? is it not recent
 in memory, that *Bishop Usher* was Employ'd to *O. Cromwell*
 by some of the Clergy of the Church of England for Liberty
 of Conscience? *Dr. Parr*, in the Life of *Dr. Usher* Primate of
Armagh, fol. 75. has that passage thus.

'*Cromwell* forbidding the Clergy, under great penalties,
 "to teach Schools, or to perform any part of their ministerial
 "function; some of the most Considerable Episcopal Clergy
 "in and about *London*, desired my Lord Primate that he
 "would use his Interest with *Cromwell*, (since they heard he

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retended a great respect for him) that as he granted Liberty
of conscience to almost all sorts of Religions, so the Epis-
copal Divines might have the same freedom of serving God
in their private Congregations (since they were not permit-
ted the publick Churches) according to the Liturgie of the
Church of England; and that neither the Ministers, nor
those that frequented That Service, might be any more
molested, or disturbed by his Souldiers: so according to their
desire, he went and used his utmost Endeavours with Crom-
well, for the taking off this restraint, which was at last pro-
mised (tho with some difficulty) that they should not be
molested, provided they meddled not with any matters re-
lating to his Government.

Certainly those Gentlemen were of my mind: And to give
Mr. Hammond his due, who I understand was one of them, he
left it to the Witnesses of his end, as his dying counsel to the
Church of England, That they displaced no man out of the
University or present Church, but that by Love, and an
holy Life they should prevail upon those in possession to come
to their Church. But this looks so little like the Policy and
Ambition of the Living, that they resolved it should be Buri-
ed with him. This I had from an eminent Hand in *Oxford*, a
year or two after his Death. An older man outliv'd him, and
one of the most Learned and Pious of that Communion, Bi-
shop *Sanderfon* I mean: They were the two great men of their
Party that was of the Party. Let us see what this Reverend man
says to our point.

'The Word of God doth expressly forbid us to subject our
consciences to the Judgment of any other, or to usurpe,
Dominion over the consciences of any One. Several cases
of conscience discussed in ten Lectures in the Divinity School
Oxford, 3 Lect. 30 Sect. pag. 103. Printed 1660.

'He is not worthy to be Christs Disciple, who is not the
Disciple of Christ alone. The Simplicity and Sincerity of the
Christian Faith, hath suffered a great prejudice since we
have been divided into Parties, neither is there any hope
that Religion should be restored to her former Original and
purity, until the Wounds that were made wider by our
daily Quarrels and Dissensions, being anointed with the Oyle
of Brotherly Love, as with a Balsom, shall begin to close a-
gain.

gain, and to grow entire into the same Unity of Faith and Charity, *ibid* Sect. 29.

The obligation of conscience doth not signifie any compulsion, for, to speak properly, the conscience can no more be compelled than the Free-will. *ibid* 4. *Lecture* Sect. pag. 109.

The express Commandment of GOD doth oblige the conscience properly by it self and by its own force; and the obligation is absolute, because it doth directly and always oblige, and because it obligeth all persons, and the obligation of it is never to be cancelled: *None but GOD alone* hath power to impose a law upon the conscience of any Man, to which it ought to be subjected, as obliging by it self, ----- The conclusion is proved by the words of the Apostle, *There is but one Law-giver, who can both save and destroy*. In which words two Arguments do profer themselves to our Observation; In the first place they assert there is but one Legislator, not one picked out amongst many; not one above many, but one exclusively, that is to say, One, and but one only. The Apostle otherwise had made use of a very ineffectual argument, to prove what he had propounded; for he rebuketh those who unadvisedly did pass their Judgment either on the persons, or the deeds of other Men, as the Invaders of their Rights. *Who art thou* (saith he) *who dost judge another* as if he should have said, dost thou know thy self, what thou art, and what thou dost? It doth not belong to thee to thrust thy sawcy Sickle into the haryest of another Man, much less bodily to sling thy self into the Throne of Almighty GOD. If already thou art ignorant of it, then know, that it belongeth unto Him alone to judge of the consciences of Men, which none can do but GOD alone. *ibid* p. 111, 112, 113.

The condition and Natural estate of the conscience self is so placed as it were in the middle betwixt GOD and the will of Man, as that which is usually and truly spoken of Kings and Emperors, may as truly be verified of the consciences of every man, *Solo Deo minores esse, nec aliquem Terris superiorem agnoscere*; They are less than God only, and Earth do acknowledge no Superior. That Speech of the Em

As likewise the first is very memorable, consistently *dominus*
vellet, ut Armem Eccliam invaderet, To exercise a Domination over
consciences, is to invade the Tower of Heaven. He is a Plun-
derer of the Glory of GOD, and a *usurarius* Invader of the
power that is due unto Him; whosoever he is that shall clatch
a right to the consciences of Men, or practice an Usurpation
over them, *ibid. Serm. 12. pag. 125.*

And yet this is the sad consequence of imposing Religion
upon conscience, and punishing Non-conformity with world-
ly Penalties.

Let us now hear what the late Bishop of Down says in his
lib. of Prophecy to our Point, 'I am very much displeased
that so many Opinions and new Doctrines are commenced
amongst us; but more troubled, that every Man that hath an
Opinion, thinks his own and other Mens Salvation concern-
ed in its maintenance, but most of all, that Men should be
Persecuted and Afflicted for disagreeing in such Opinions,
which they cannot with sufficient grounds obtrude upon o-
thers necessarily, because they cannot propound them infal-
libly, and because they have no warrant from Scripture so to
do; for if I shal tie other Men to believe my Opinion, be-
cause I think I have a place of Scripture which seems to
warrant it to my understanding; why may he not serve up
another dissent to me in the same dress, and exact the same
task of me to believe the contradictory? *Liberty of Prophecy,*
Epist. Dedicat. pag. 8, 9.

The experience which Christendom hath had in this last
Age is Argument enough that *Toleration of Differing Opinions*
is so far from disturbing the publick Peace, or destroying the
Interest of Princes and Common Wealths, that it does advan-
tage to the Publick, it secures Peace, because there is not so
much as the pretence of Religion, left to such persons to
contend for, it being already indulged to them. *ibid. pag. 21.*

It is a proverbial saying, *Quod nimia familiaritas servorum*
est conspiratio adversus Dominum, and they who tort their
security run in Grots and Cellers, and Retirements, think
that they being upon the defensive; those Princes and those
Laws that drive them to it are their Enemies, and therefore
they cannot be secure, unless the power of the one, and the
Obligation of the other be lessened and rescinded; and then

'the being restrained and made miserable, inclines the discontented persons mutually, and makes more hearty and dangerous considerations. *ibid. pag. 12.*

'No Man speaks more unreasonably, than he that denies to men the use of their reason in choice of their Religion. *ibid. pag. 169.*

'No Christian is to be put to Death, Dismembred, or otherwise directly persecuted for his Opinion, which does not teach Impiety or Blasphemy. *ibid. pag. 190.*

'There is a popular Pity that follows all Persons in Misery, and that compassion breeds likeness of Affections, and that very often produces likeness of Perswasion; and so much the rather because there arises a Jealousie and pregnant Suspicion that they who persecute an Opinion are destitute of sufficient Arguments to confute it, and that the Hangman is the best Disputant. *ibid. pag. 197, 198.*

'If a Man cannot change his Opinion when he lists, nor ever does heartily or resolutely, but when he cannot do otherwise, than to use force, may make him a Hypocrite, but never to be a right Believer, and so instead of erecting a Trophæe to GOD and true Religion, we build a Monument for the Devil. *ibid. pag. 200.*

'The Trick of giving Persons differing in Opinion over the secular Power, at the best is no better than Hypocrisis, removing Envy from themselves, and laying it upon others, a refusing to do that in external Act, which they do in Council and Approbation. *ibid. pag. 209.*

Thus far Bishop Tayler, and one of the most learned Men of the Church of England in his time.

Let me add another Bishop, held Learned by all, and in great Reputation with the Men of his communion, and among them the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled, who have sufficiently declared against this persecuting Spirit on the account of Religion, by their full approbation of, and thanks returned to the Bishop of Saint Asaph for his Sermon preached before them, November the 5th. 1680. and their desire that he would Print and publish that Sermon. The Bishop says, that, 'They who are most given to Hate and to Destroy others, especially those others who differ from them in Religion, they are not the Church of GOD, or at least they are so far corrupt in that particular. *pag. 3.*

Again

Again he says, 'That, of Societies of Men, Christians, of
'all others, are most averse from wayes of Violence and
'Blood; especially from using any such wayes upon the ac-
'count of Religion: And among Christian Churches, where
'they differ among themselves, if either of them use those
'ways upon the account of Religion, they give a strong Pre-
'sumption against themselves that they are not truly Christi-
ans. *ibid.* pag. 9.

'There is reason for this, because, we know that Christ
'gave Love for the character by which his Disciples were to be
'known. *John* 13. 35. *By this shall all men know that you are*
'*my Disciples, if you have love to one another.* And least men
'should unchristen others first, that they may hate them, and
'Destroy them afterwards, Christ enlarged his precept of
'Love, and extended it even to Enemies, and not only to
'ours, but to the Enemies of our Religion, *Mat.* 5. 43, 44.
ibid. pag. 9.

'As our Religion excells all others in this admirable tem-
'per, so by this we may usually judge who they are that
'excell among Christian churches, when there hapens any
difference between them, whether touching the Faith, or
'the terms of Communion. They that were the more fierce,
'they generally had the worst Cause. *ibid.* pag. 12, 13.

'The Council of *Nice* suppressed the *Arrians* by no other
'Force, but putting *Arrians* out of their Bishopricks; they
'could not think Hereticks fit to be trusted with cure of
Souls; but otherwise, as to *Temporal things*, I do not find that
'they inflicted any kind of Punishment; but when the *Ar-*
'*rians* came to have the Power in their Hands, when theirs
'was come to be the *Imperial Religion*, then Depriving was
'nothing; Banishment was the least that they inflicted. *ibid.*
pag. 14.

'Neither our Religion nor our church, is of a *persecution*
'Spirit. I know not how it may be in particular Persons,
'but I say again, it is not in the *Genious* of our Church: She
hath no Doctrine that *teacheth persecution.* *ibid.* pag. 20.

'I would have no man punished for his Religion, no not
them that destroy men for Religion. *ibid.* pag. 37.

Doctor *Stillingsfleet* comes short of none of them on this sub-
ject. Our Saviour, says he, never pressed Followers as men do

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Souldiers, but said, If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross (not his Sword) and follow Me. His was hampered
kai philanthropos nomothetes, his very commands shewed his

Ironium, a Weapon-Salve for the Churches Wounds, by Edward Strillingfleet, Rector of Sutton in Bedfordshire, in Preface to the Reader.

Meekness; his Laws were sweet and gentle Laws; not like Draco's that were write in blood, unless it were his own that gave them. His design was to ease Men of their former Burdens, and not lay on more; the Duties he required were no other but such as were necessary, and withal very just and reasonable. He that came to take away the insupportable Yoke of Jewish ceremonies, certainly did never intend to gall the necks of his Disciples with another in stead of it. And it would be strange if the Church should require more than Christ himself did, and make other conditions of her communion, than our Saviour did of Discipleship. What possible reason can be assigned, or given why such things should not be sufficient for communion with a Church, which are sufficient for eternal Salvation? And certainly those things are sufficient for that, which are laid down as necessary Duties for Christianity by our Lord and Saviour in his Word. What ground can there be, why Christians should not stand upon the same terms now, which they did in the time of Christ and his Apostles? Was not Religion sufficiently guarded and fenced in them? Was there ever more true and cordial Reverence in the Worship of GOD? What character hath Christ given the Church to bind Men up to more than Himself hath done? or to exclude those from her Society who may be admitted into Heaven? Will Christ ever thank Men at the great day for keeping such out from communion with His Church, when he will vouchsafe not only Crowns of Glory to; but it may be, Angels too, if there be any such things there? The Grand Commission the Apostles were sent out with, was only to teach what Christ had commanded them. Not the least Intimation of any Power given them to impose, or require any thing beyond what Himself had spoken to them, or they were directed to by the Immediate Guidance of the Spirit of GOD.

Without all controversie, the main Inlet of all the Distractions, Confusions and Divisions of the Christian World

World; hath been by adding other conditions of church communion than Christ hath done.

There is nothing the *Primitive Church* deserves greater imitation by us in, than in that admirable Temper, Moderation and Condescension which was used in it towards all the Members of it.

This admirable Temper in the *Primitive Church* might be largely cleared; from that Liberty they allowed freely to Dissenters from them in matters of Practice and Opinion; as might be cleared from *Cyprian, Austin, Jerome*, and others.-----Leaving the Men to be won by observing the true decency and order of Churches, whereby those who act upon a true Principle of Christian ingenuity may be sooner drawn to a Compliance in all lawful things, than by Force and rigorous Impositions, which make men suspect the weight of the thing itself, when such Force is used to make it enter. in *Preface*.

The same is in effect declared by the *House of commons*, when they returned their Thanks to *Dr. Tillotson, Dean of Canterbury*, for his Sermon preached before them November the 5th, 1678. desiring him to Print that Sermon, where he says, upon our Saviours Words, 'Ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of; Ye own your selves to be my Disciples, but do you consider what Spirit now Acts and Governs you? not that surely which my Doctrine designs to mould and fashion you into, which is not a *Furious and Persecuting*, and *Destructive Spirit*, but Mild and Gentle, and Saving; tender of the Lives and Interests of Men, even of those who are our greatest Enemies. pag 6, 7.

No difference of Religion, no pretence of Zeal for God and Christ can warrant and justify this Passionate and Fierce, this Vindictive and Exterminating Spirit. *ibid. pag. 7.*

He (i.e. Christ) came to introduce a Religion, which consults not only the Eternal Salvation of mens Souls, but their Temporal Peace and Security, their Comfort and Happiness in this World. *ibid. pag. 8.*

It seemed good to the Author of this Institution to compel no man to it by Temporal Punishment. *ibid. pag. 13.*

To separate Goodness and Mercy from God, Compassion and Charity from Religion, is to make the two best things

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‘in the World, God and Religion, good for nothing. *ibid.*
pag. 19.

‘True Christianity is not only the best, but the best natured
‘Institution in the World; and so far as any Church is depart-
‘ed from good Nature, and become Cruel and Barbarous,
‘so far it is degenerated from Christianity. *ibid.* pag. 30.

Thus far *Dr. Tillotson*, who, to be sure, deserves not to be
thought the least Eminent in the present Church of England.
Let us hear what Doctor *Burnet* says to it.

‘Men are not Masters of their own Perswasions, and can-
‘not change their thoughts as they please; he that believes
‘any thing concerning Religion, cannot turn as the Prince com-
‘mands him, or accomodate himself to the Law, or his present In-
‘terests, unless he arrive at that pitch of *Atheism*, as to look
‘on Religion only as a matter of Policy, and an Engine for
‘civil Government; *Dr. Burnet’s History of the Rights of Princes*,
‘&c. in his Preface, pag. 49.

‘Tis this Doctor’s pains she owes the very History of her Re-
formation, and as by it he has perpetuated his Name with
hers, certainly he must have Credit with her, or she can de-
serve none with any body else, for no man could well go fur-
ther to oblige her.

Let me here bring in a lay Member of the Church of Eng-
land, Sir *Robert Poynz*, in his vindication of *Monarchy*, who
yields us an excellent Testimony to the matter in hand, ‘The
‘Sword *avails little* with the Souls of Men, unless to destroy
‘them together with their Bodies, and to make men desperate,
‘or *dissemblers* in Religion, and when they find opportunity
‘to fall into *Rebellion*, as there are many Examples. p. 17.

‘In the Ancient times of Christianity, such means were
‘not used as might make *Hereticks* and *Schismatics* more obsti-
‘nate than docile, through the preposterous Proceedings of the
‘Magistrates and Ministers of Justice in the Execution of Penal
‘Laws, used rather as *Snares* for gaining of Money and Pecuniary
‘Mulcts impos’d, rather as *Prices* set upon Offences,
‘than as Punishments for the Reformation of Manners. *ibid.*
pag. 28.

‘The *Ancient Christians* were forbidden by the *Imperial*
L. 6 Cod. ‘Law, as also by the Laws of other Christian
‘*Pagan* Nations, under a great Penalty to meddle with

the Goods of the Jews or Pagans living peaceably. ibid.

pag. 29.

'For, the Goods of the Jews, although Enemies to the Christian Religion, cannot for the cause of Religion come by Escheats unto christian Princes, under whom they Live. *ibid.*

pag. 29.

'It is truly said, that Peace, a Messenger whereof, an Angel hath been chosen to be, is scarce ever Established by the Sword; and the Gospel, the blessed Peace, cannot be published by the Sound of the Cannon; neither the Sacred Word be conveyed unto us, by the impious hands of Soldiers; neither Tranquillity be brought to the Persons and consciences of Men, by that which brings Ruin unto Nations. *ibid.* pag. 30.

He has said much in a little, the Talent and Honour of Men's truly great. I give this still to the Church of England's Principles, which yet makes it harder for her to justify her Practice in her use of Power. But let us hear a King speak, and on the Church of England is bound to hear by many Obligations.

King Charles the First, out of his tender and princely Sence of the sad and bleeding Condition of the Kingdom, and his unfeigned Desires to apply such Remedies, as by the blessing of Almighty God, might settle it in Peace; by the Advice of the Lords and Commons of Parliament Assembled at Oxford, propounded and desired, that all the Members of both Houses might securely meet in a full and free Convention of Parliament, there to treat, consult and agree upon such things, as may conduce to the maintenance and defence of the reformed Protestant Religion, with due consideration to just and reasonable ease to tender consciences. The Kings Message of a Treaty, March 3. 1643. from Oxford, Superscribed to the Lords and Commons of Parliament assembled at West-

minster.

In the Kings Twentieth Message for peace, January 29. 1645. he has these Words, That by the Liberty offered in his Message of the 5th. present, for the ease of their consciences, he will not communicate in the Service already established by Act of Parliament in this Kingdom, He intends that all other Persons behaving themselves peaceable in and towards the civil Government, shall have the free Exercise of their Religion according to their own way.

In

In the Thirty third Message for peace, November 17. 1644, there are these Words, His Majesty considering the great present Distempers concerning Church Discipline, and that the Presbyterian Government is now in practice, his Majesty is of such Confusion, as much as may be, and for the satisfaction of his two Houses, is content that the said Government be legally permitted to stand in the same condition as now is, for three Years, provided, that his Majesty and those of his Judgements (or any other who cannot in conscience submit themselves) be not obliged to comply with the Presbyterian Government, but have free practice of their own Profession without receiving any Prejudice thereby From the Use of Wights.

In his Declaration to all his people, January 18. 1645. from Carisbrook castle, after the Votes of no Address, He says, I have sacrificed to my two Houses of Parliament, for the Peace of the Kingdom, all, but what is much more dear to me than my life, my Conscience and my Honour.

In his Letter to the Lords, Gentlemen and Committee of the SCOT'S Parliament, together with the Officers of the Army, July 3. 1648. from Carisbrook castle. --- As the best foundation of Loyalty is Christianity, so true Christianity is perfect Loyalty.

VI. EIKON, BAZ ILIKAI Upon his Majesties retirement from Westminster. --- Sure it ceases to be Counsel, when Reason is used, as to Men to perswade, but Force and Terror as to Brutes, to drive and compel men to whatever tumultuary Passions shall project. He deserves to be a Slave without pity or Redemption, that is content to have his Rational Sovereignty of his Soul, and Liberty of his Will and Words for captivated. --- Again, ibid. Sure that Man cannot be blameable to God or Man, who seriously endeavours to see the best reason of things, and faithfully follows what he takes for reason; the uprightness of his Intentions will excuse the possible failings of his Understanding. --- Again, ibid. I know no Resolutions more worthy a Christian King, than to prefer his conscience before his Kingdoms.

XII. Upon the Rebellion and Troubles in Ireland, --- Some kind of Zeal counts all merciful Moderation Lukewarmness, and had rather be cruel than accounted cold, and is not seldom more greedy to kill a be Bear for her Skin, than for any harm he hath

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hath done.----ibid, O my God, thou seest how much Cruelty among Christians is acted under the colour of Religion, as if we could not be Christians unless we Crucifie one another.

XIII. Upon the calling the Scots and their coming.----*Sure in matters of Religion those Truth's gain most on mens Judgments and Consciences which are least urged with Secular violence, which weakens Truth with Prejudices; and is unreasonable to be used, till such means of rational Conviction hath been appl'd, as leaving no excuse for Ignorance condemns mens Obstinacy to deserv'd Penalties.----Violent Motions are neither Manly, Christian nor Loyal.---The proper Engine of Faction is Force; the Arbitrator of Beasts, not of reasonable Men; much less of humble Christians and loyal Subjects, in matters of Religion.*

XIV. Upon the Covenant.----*Religion requires charity and candor to others of different Opinions.----Nothing Violent and Injurious can be Religious.*

XV. Upon the many Jealousies raised, and Scandals cast upon the King to stir up the People against him.----*In point of true Conscientious Tendernefs, (attended with Humility and Meeknefs; not with proud or arrogant Activity, which seeks to hatch every egge of indifferent Opinion to Faction or Schism) I have oft declared how little I desire my Laws and Scepter should intrench ever Gods Sovereignty, which is the only King of mens consciences.*

XXVII. To the prince of Wales.----*Take heed of abetting to any Factions; your partial adhering to any one Side gains you not so great Advantages in some Mens Hearts (who are prone to be of their Kings Religion) as it looseth you in others, who think themselves, and their profession, first despised, then persecuted by you.---My counsel and charge to you is, That you seriously consider the former real or objected Miscarriages, which might occasion my Troubles, that you may avoid them.---A charitable connivance and Christian Toleration, often dissipates their Strength whom rougher Opposition fortifies.----Always keep up Sollicitudine and those Fundamental Truths (which mend both Hearts and Lives of Men) with impartial Favours and Justice.---Your Prerogative is best shewed and exercised in remitting rather than exacting the rigour of the Law, there being nothing worse than legal Tyranny.*

And

And as this was the Sense and Judgment of a King, that Time and the greatest Troubles had inform'd with a superiour Judgment, (and which to be sure highly justifies the measures that are now taken) So Dr. *Hudson* his *Plain-dealing Chaplain* must not be forgotten by us on this occasion; who took the freedom to tell his Royal Master, *That he looks upon the calamities he laboured under, to be the hand of God upon him, for not having given God his due over conscience.*

One can easily imagin this to be Reformation Language, and then it is not hard to think how low that Church must be fallen, that from so free and excellent a Principle, is come to make, execute and uphold *Penal Laws* for Religion, against her conscientious Neighbours; but it is to be hoped, that like *Nebuchadnezzar's Image*, whose Feet was a mixture of Iron and Clay, and therefore could not stand for ever; Persecution will not be able to mix so with the Seed of Men but that Humanity will overcome, and Mankind one day be delivered from that Iron hard and fierce Nature.

I have done with my Church of *England's* Evidences against Persecution. And for the Judgment of all sorts of Dissenters in that point, let their Practice have been what it will, nothing is clearer than that they disallow of Persecution, which their daily Addresses of Thanks to the King, for his General Ease by his Excellent Declaration are an undoubted Proof.

Thus then we see it is evident, that it is not only the Duty of all Parties, as they would be thought Christians, to repeal *Penal Laws* for Religion, but upon a fair enquiry, we see it is the avowed Principle of every party at one time or other that conscience ought not to be compel'd, nor Religion impos'd upon worldly Penalties. And so I come to the third and last part of this Discourse.

PART. III.

It is the Interest of all Parties, and especially the Church of England.

AS I take all Men to be unwillingly separated from their Interests, and consequently ought only to be fought an

discours'd in them, so it must be granted me on all hands, that
Interests change as well as Times, and tis the Wisdom of a
Man to observe the Courses, and *humer* the Motions of his In-
terest, as the best way to preserve it. And least any ill-na-
tur'd or mistaken Person should call it temporizing, I make
this early Provision; That I mean no immoral or corrupt
compliance: A *Temporizing*, deservedly base with Men of
Virtue, and which in all times, my practice as well as Judge-
ment hath shown the fast Aversion to. For upon the principle I
now go, and which I lay down, as common and granted in
Reason and Fact with all Parties concern'd in this Discourse,
that Man, does not change, that *morally* follows his Interest
under all its Revolutions, because to be true to his Interest is
his first civil principle, I premise this to introduce what I have
to offer, with respect to the Interests to be now treated upon.

And first, I say, I take it to be the Interest of the Church of
England to abolish the *Penal Laws*, because *it never was her Inter-
est to make them*. My reasons for that Opinion are these. First,
they have been an Argument to invalidate the Sufferings of
the Reformers, because if it be unlawful to disobey Govern-
ment about matters of Religion they were in the wrong. And
if they say, O but they were in Error that punish'd their Non-
conformity; I answer, how can she prove that she is Infal-
libly in the Right? And if this cannot be done, she compells
to an uncertainty upon the same terms. *Secondly*, she has o-
verthrown the Principles upon which she separated from
Rome. For if it be unlawful to plead Scripture and conscience
to vindicate Dissent from her Communion, it was unlawful
for her upon the same Plea to dissent from the church of Rome,
unless she will say again, that she was in the Right. But the
other is in the wrong, and she knows this is no Answer but a
begging of the Question; for they that separate from her,
think themselves as Serious, Devout; and as much in the right
as she could do. If then *conscience* and *Scripture*, interpreted
with the best *Light* she had, were the ground of her Reforma-
tion, she must allow the Liberty she takes, or she *casts her
Words, and subverts her Foundation*; than which nothing can
be more destructive to the Interest of any Being, Civil or
Ecclesiastical. *Thirdly*, The *penal Laws* have been the great
Make-bate in the Kingdom from the beginning. For if I should

grant that she had once been truly the Church of England, I mean, consisting of all the people of England, (which she was not, for there were diverse parties dissenting from the first establishment) yet since it afterwards appear'd she was but one party tho the biggest, she ought not to have made her power more National than her Faith, nor her Faith so by the Force of her Temporal Authority. 'Tis true she got the Magistrare of her side, but she engaged him too far. For she knew Christ did not leave *Caesar* Executor to his last Will and Testament, and that that should be the reason why she did so, was none of the best *Ornaments* to her Reformation. That she was but a party, tho the biggest, by the Advantages that temporal power brought her, I shall easily prove, but I will introduce it with a short Account of our State-Reformation here in England.

Henry the Eighth, was a kind of *Hermaphrodite* in Religion, or in the Language of the times, a *Trimmer*; being a meddler of Papist and Protestant, and that part he acted to the Life, or to the Death rather; Sacrificing on the same Day Men of both Religions, because one was not protestant enough, and t'other papist enough for him. In this time were some *Anabaptists*, for the distinction of church of England, and *calvinists* was nor then known.

Edward the Sixth succeeded, a prince that promised Vertues, that might more than ballance the Excesses of his Father, and yet by *Arch Bishop Cramer*, was compelled to sign a Warrant to Burn poor *Joan of Kent*, a famous Woman, but counted an Enthusiast: But to prove what I said of him, 'twas not without frequent Denials and Tears, and the Bishop taking upon him to answer for it at Gods Judgment; of which I hope his Soul was discharged, tho his Body, by the same Law, suffered the same punishment in the succeeding Reign. Thus even the *protestants* begun with Blood for meer Religion, and taught the *Romanists*, in succeeding times, how to deal with them.

At this time the controversie grew warm between the Church of England and the *calvinists*, that were the Abler preachers and the Better Livers, The Bishops being mostly men of State, and some of them looking rather backward than forward, Witness the Difficulty the King had to get *Hooper*

con-

consecrated Bishop, without conformity to the reserved ceremonies.

Queen *Mary* came in, and ended the Quarrel at the Stake. Now *Kidly* and *Hooper* hug, and are the dearest Brethren and best Friends in the World. *Hooper* keeps his ground, and *Kidly* stoops with his ceremonies to others further Reformation. But this Light and Union flowed from their Persecution: For those abroad at *Frankford*, and other places were not upon so good Terms: Their Fews grew so great that the one refused communion with the other, many endeavours were used to quench the Fire, but they were ineffectual; at best it lay under the Ashes of their Assention for another time; for no sooner was *Queen Elizabeth* upon her Throne then they returned, and their Difference with them. They managed it civilly for a while, but Ambition in some, and covetousness in others on the one hand, and Discretion giving way to Resentment on the other, they first ply the *Queen* and her Ministers, and when that ended in favour of the *Men of Ceremony*, the others arraigned them before the first Reformers abroad, at *Geneva*, *Basel*, *Zurich*, &c. The leading Prelates by their Letters, as Doctor *Barnet* lately tells us, in his Printed Relation of his Travels, clear themselves to those first Doctors of any such Imputation, and lay all upon the *Queen*, who for Reasons of State would not be brought to so Inceremonious a way of Worship as that of the *Calvinists*.

At this time there were *Papists*, *Protestants*, *Evangelists*, *Præcisi*, *Ubiquitists*, *Familists* or *Enthusiasts* and *Anabaptists* in England; when the very first Year of her Reign, a Law for *Uniformity in Worship and Discipline* was enacted, and more followed of the severest Nature, and sometimes executed. Thus then we see that there never was such a thing as a Church of *England* since the dayes of *Papery*, that is, a Church of Communion containing all the People of the Kingdom, and so cannot be said to be so much as a *Twin* of the Reformation; nevertheless she got the blessing of the Civil Magistrate. She made him great to be great by him: If she might be the Church, he should be the Head. Much good may the Bargain do her. Now is the time for her to stand to her Principle. I never knew any Body exceed their Bounds.

Bounds that were not met with at last. If we could escape Men, God we cannot, his Providence will overtake us, and find us out.

By all this then it appearing, that the Church of England was not the Nation, the Case is plain that the *Penal Laws* were a *Male-bate*, for they Sacrificed every sort of people whose Consciences differed from the Church of England; which first put the *Romanist* upon flattering Prerogative, and courted its shelter from the wrath of those Laws. The Address could not be unpleasant to Princes; and we see it was not; for *King James*, that came in with Invectives against Popery, entering the List with the Learn'd of that Church, and charging her with all the Marks the *Revelation* gives to that of *Antichrist*, grew at last so tame and easy towards the *Romanists*, that our own Story tells us of the Fears of the encroachment of *Popery* in the latter Parliament of his Reign.

In *King Charles* the First's time, no body can doubt of the Complaint, because that was in great measure the drift of every Parliament, and at last one Reason of the War. On the other hand the *Severity* of the Bishops against Men of their own Principles, and in the main, of their own communion, either because they were more zealous in Preaching, more followed of the People, or could not wear some odd Garment, and less lead the Dance on a Lords Day at a Maypole, (the Relique of *Flore* the *Roman* Strumpet) or perhaps for rubbing upon the Ambition, Covetousness and Laziness of the Dignified, and Ignorance and Looseness of the ordinary Clergy of the Church (of which I could produce Five hundred gross Instances) It say these things breed bad blood, and in part, gave beginnings to those Animositys, that at last broke forth, with some other Pretences into all those National Troubles, that agitated this poor Kingdom for Ten years together, in which the Church of England became the greatest Loser. Her Clergy turn'd out, her Nobility and Gentry Sequestred, Decimated, Imprisoned, &c. And whatever she is pleased to think, nothing is truer, than that her *Penal Laws*, and Conduct in the *Star-Chamber*, and *high Commission Courts* in matters of Religion, was her overthrow.

'Tis as evident, the same Humor since the Restoration of the late King, has had almost the same Effect. For nothing

was grown so little and contemptible as the Church of England in this Kingdom she now intitles her self the Church of: Witness the Elections of the last three Parliaments before this, I know it may be said the Persons chosen were church goers; I confess it, for the Law would have them so. But no body were more averse to the Politicks of the Clergy; inasmuch that the Parson and parish almost every where divided upon the Question of their Election. In truth, it has been the *Favour and Countenance* of the Crown, and her intrinsic Interest or Value, that has kept her up to this Day; else her *Penal Laws*, the *Bulwork* of the Church of England, by the same figure, that she is on against Popery, had sunk her long since.

I hope I may, by this time, conclude, without offence, that the *Penal Laws* have been a *Mak-bate* in the great Family of the Kingdom, setting the Father against the children, and Brethren against Brethren; not only giving the Empire to one, but endeavouring to extinguish the rest; and that for this the Church of England has once paid a severe Reckoning. I apply it thus: Is it not her Interest to be careful she does it not a second time? she has a fair Opportunity to prevent it, and keep her self where she is, that is, the publick Religion of the Countrey, with the real Maintenance of it; which is a plain preference to all the rest. If she hopes by her aversion to a general ease, to set up for a *Bulwork* against *Popery*, one Year will show the Trick, and mightily deceive her, and the Opportunity will be lost, and another *Bargain* driven, I dare assure her, mightily to her Disadvantage. Violence and Tyranny are no natural consequences of Popery, for then they would follow every where, and in all places and times alike. But we see in twenty Governments in *Germany* there is none for Religion, nor was not for an Age in *France*. and in *Poland*, the *Papish* Cantons of *Switzerland*, *Venice*, *Lucca*; *Colonia*, &c. where that Religion is Dominant, the people enjoy their Ancient and Civil Rights a little more steadily than they have of late times done in some Protestant Countries nearer home, almost ever since the Reformation. Is this against Protestantcy? No, but very much against Protestants; For had they been true to their Principles, we had been upon better Terms. So that the Reformation was not the Fault, but

but not keeping to it better than some have done; For where-
as they were *Papists* that both obtain'd the *Great Charter*, and
Charter of Forrefts, and in the successive Reigns of the Kings
of their Religion. Industiously laboured the confirmation
of them, as the great *Tens* of their Liberties and Properties,
by above thirty other Laws; we find almost an unequal num-
ber to destroy them, and but one made in their Favour since
the Reformation, and that shrowdly against the will of the
high Church-Ment too; I mean the *Petition and Right*, in the
third Year of *Charles* the first. In short, They desire a Legal
Security with us, and we are afraid of it, least it should insecu-
re us; when nothing can do it so certainly as their Insecu-
rity, for Safety makes no Man desperate. And he that seeks ease
by Law, therefore does it, because he would not attempt it
by Force. Are we afraid of their power, and yet provoke it?
If this Jealousie and Aversion prevail, it may drive her to a
Bargain with the Kingdom for such general Redemption of
property, as may desolve our great corporation of con-
science, and then she will think that half a Loaf had been bet-
ter than no Bread, and that it had been more advisable to have
parted with *Penal Laws*, that only serv'd to dress her in Satyr,
than have lost all for keeping them; especially, when it
was but parting with *Spurs, Claws and Bills*, that made her
look more like a *Vulture* than a *Dove*, and a *Lyon* than a
Lamb.

But I proceed to my next Reason, why it is her Interest to
Repeal those *Penal Laws*, (tho a greater cannot be advanced
to Men than *Self-preservation*) and that is, *That she else breaks
with a King heartily inclin'd to preserve her by any way, that is
not persecuting*, and whose Interest she once persu'd at all
Adventures, when more than she sees was suggested to her
by the Men of the Interest she opposed in Favour of his claim.
What then has befallen her, that she changes the course she
took with such Resolutions of perseverance? for bringing him
to the Crown with this Religion, could not be more his Duty
to his Title, or her Interest to support her own, than it is still,
to be fair with him. If she owed the one to him and to Christi-
anity, she is not less indebted to her self the other. Does he
seek to impose his own Religion upon her? By no means.
There is no Body would abhor the Attempt; or, at all Ad-
ventures

sentures, condemn it more than myself. What then is the matter? why he desires ease for his Religion. She does not think fit to consider him in this. I do not so the King she brought forth this Objection to the Crown. Certainly she is much in the wrong, and she is her self an ill Counsellor (tho it was become her calling). But to give him Roast-meat, then beat him with the Spit. Is not this to quit those high principles of Loyalty and Christianity she valued her self once upon; and what she can provoke the Mischiet she fears? certainly this is dividing in Judgement from him that she has acknowledged to be her Ecclesiastical Head.

My fifth Reason is, that as the making and executing the Penal Laws for Religion affects all the several parties of *Protestant Dissenters* as well as the *Papists*, (the Judges in *Parliament*, and he at the Head of them, giving it as their Opinion — they were equally exposed to those Laws) and that are thereby naturally driven into an Interest with them; so it is at this time greatly the prudence of the Church of England to repeal them; for by so doing she divides the Interest that Self-preservation allows all Men to pursue, that are united by danger. And since she is assured the *Papists* do not have the self-ease in this King's time than if the Laws were repealed, and that her Fears are not of the succeeding Reigns, how is their Repeal a great Insecurity, especially when by that she draws into her Interest all the *Protestant Dissenters*, that are abundantly more considerable than the *Papists*, and that are unwilling that *Papery* should be National as herself. For if this be not granted, see what Reputation follows to the Church of England. She tells the King she does not desire her Friends should be persecuted, yet the forbearance must not be by *Declaration* to save the Government, nor by Law to save her; and without one of these Warrants, every civil Magistrate and Officer in England is perjured that suffers them in that Liberty against Law. How can she be sincerely willing that should be done, that she is not willing should be done legally?

But Sixthly, the Church of England does not know but they or some other party may at one time or other prevail. It seems to me her Interest to set a good Example, and so to be speak easie Terms for herself. I know of none intended, and

believe no Body but her self can place her so low, yet if that were her unhappiness, I think to have civil Property secur'd out of the question of Religion, and constraint upon Conscience prevented by a Glorious *Magna Charta* for the Liberty of it, were not a thing of ill consequence to her Interest. Let us but consider what other Princes did for their own Religion, within the last seven Reigns, when they came to the Crown, and we cannot think so soft and equal a thing as an impartial Liberty of Conscience, after all that has been said of a Popish Successor, an ordinary character of a Prince, or a mean Assurance to us: This ought not to slip her reflection. Besides, there is some care due to Posterity: Tho the present Members of her communion may escape the Temptation, their Children may not: They may change the Religion of their Education, and conscientiously chuse some other Communion. Would they submit the Fortunes they leave them to the Rap of hungry *Courtiers*, *Biggots*, and *indigent Informers*, or have their poor Posterity impoverish'd, Banish'd, or Executed for Sober and Religious Dissent? GOD knows into whose hands these Laws at last may fall, what Mischief they may do, and to whom. Believe me, a King of the humor of *Sr. J. K. of the West*, or *Sr. W. A. of Reading*, or *Sr. R. B. of Sr. S. S. of London*, would, with such Vouchers, quickly make a *Golgotha* of the Kingdom. If she thinks her self considerable in number or Estate, she will have the more to lose. Let her not therefore establish that in the prejudice of others, that may in the hands of others turn to her prejudice.

Lastly, I would not have her miss the advantage that is design'd her by those that perhaps she thinks worst of. I dare say no body would willingly see the *Presbyterians* in her chair, and yet that may happen to be the consequence of her Tenaciousness in a little time. For if the Aversion her Sons promote by whole sale against Popery should prevail, the remains of it in her self are not like to escape that Reformation; I mean, her *Episcopal Government*, and the ceremonies of her Worship, for which she has vext the most Conscientious People of this Kingdom above an Age past. And the *Presbyterian* being a Rich, Industrious and numerous Party, as well among the Nobility and Gentry, as Trading and Country People, I cannot see but the next Motion, naturally speaking,

is like to tend that way ; for other Parties, however well esteemed , may seem too great a step of Reformation at once, and methinks she has tasted enough of that *Regiment*, to be once wise, and keep the *Ballance* in her own Hands. And certain it is, that nothing will so effectually do this, as the entrenched *Liberty of Conscience* ; for then there will be four Parties of Dissenters besides her self, to *ballance* against any Designs that may *warp or byass* things to their Advancement. And that which ought to induce the Church of *England* not a little to hasten , as well as do the thing , is this ; she is now a sort of National Church by *Power*, she will then be the Publick Church by Concurrence of all Parties . Instead of Enemies to invade or undermine her, they that should do it, are made the Friends of her safety by the happiness they enjoy through her complacency : and if any should be so unnatural or ungrateful to her, the interest of the rest will oblige them to be her *Spys and Security* against the Ambition of any such Party. I do heartily pray to GOD that he would *enlighten the eyes of her Leaders*, and give them good hearts too, that Faction may not prevail against Charity, in the name of Religion : And above all, that she would not be proud of her numbers, or stand off upon that Reflection ; for that alone will quickly lessen them in a Nation loving Freedom as much as this we live in ; And what appears in the Town is an ill glass to take a prospect of the Country by : There are Parishes that have Fifteen Thousand Souls in them , and if two come to Church it is matter of Brag, tho half the rest be sown among the several Dissenting Congregations of their Judgement. I would not have her mistaken, tho *Popery* be an Unpopular thing, 'tis as certain she of a long time has not been Popular, and on that principle never can be : And if she should *plow with that Heifer* now , and gain a little by the Aversion to Popery ; when it is discerned that Popery does return to the civil Interest of the Kingdom , they will quickly be Friends. For besides that we are the easiest and best natur'd people in the World to be appeas'd, there are those charms in Liberty and Property to *English Nature* that no endeavours can resist or disappoint. And can we reasonably think the *Romanists* will be wanting in that , when they see it is their own (and perhaps their only) interest to do so ? These are

the Arguments which, I confess, have prevailed with me to importune the Church of England to yeild to the repeal of all the Penal Statutes, and I should be glad to see them either well Refuted or Submitted to.

I shall now *Address* my self to those of the *Roman Church*, and hope to make it appear it is their Interest to sit down thankfully with the *Liberty of Conscience* herein desired, and that a *Toleration* and no more, is that which all *Romanists* ought to be satisfied with. My Reasons are these. *First*, The *Opposition* that Popery every where finds: For in nothing is the Kingdom so much of a mind as in this Aversion: 'Tis no news, and so may be the better said and taken. I say then this *Unity*, this *Universality*, and this *Visibility* against Popery, make the attempt, for more than Liberty of Conscience, too great and dangerous. I believe there may be some poor *filly Biggots* that hope bigger, and talk further; but who can help that? there are weake People of all sides, and they will be making a Pudder: but what's the *Language of their true Interest*, the *Infallible guide* of the wiser Men? *Safety* certainly; and that in succeeding Reigns to chuse: And if so, their steps must be modest, for they are Watcht and Number'd. And tho' their Prudence should submit to their Zeal, both must yeild to Necessity, whether they like it or no. What they convert upon the Square, Perswasion I mean, is their own, and much good may it do them. But the fear is not of this, and for compelling the averse *Genius* of the Kingdom, they have not the means, whatever they would do if they had them: Which is my second Reason. I say they have not the Power, and that is what we apprehend most. There are three things that prove this in my Opinion. First, *their want of Hands*; next, *want of time*; and lastly, *their intestine Division*; which whatever we think, is not inconsiderable. They are few, we must all agree, to the Kingdom, upon the best computation that could be made. Out of eight Millions of people, they are not Thirty Thousand; and those but thinly sown up and down the Nation; by which it appears that the disproportion of the *natural strength* is not les than *Two Hundred and Seventy Parts to one*. So that Popery in England is like a *Spirit without a Body*, or a General without an Army. It can hurt no more than Bullets without Powder, or a Sword and no Hand

to use it. I dare say, there is not of that communion, enough at once, to make all the coal-fires in London, and yet we are apprehensive they are able to consume the whole Kingdom. I am still more afraid of her Fears than of them; for tho they seem high, she thinks their Religion is no Religion has appeared much lower.

O but they have the King of their side, and he has the Executive power in his hands! True, and this I call the Artificial strength of the Kingdom. But I say, first we have his Word to bind him. And tho some may think our Kings cannot be tyed by their people, certainly they may be tyed by themselves. What if I don't look upon the Act of both Houses to oblige the King, his own concession must; and that may be given in an Act of State. I take the King to be as well obliged in Honour and Conscience to what he promises his people in another Method, as if it had been by his Royal Assent in Parliament; for an honest Man's word is good every where, And why a Kings should not, I can't tell. 'Tis true, the place differs and the Voice comes with greater Solemnity, but why it should with greater Truth I know not. And if the Church of England will but be advised to give him the opportunity of Keeping his repeated word with her, and not deprive her self of that advantage by Jealousies and Diffidences that make her suspected, and may force her into another conduct, I cannot help believing that the King will not to a little let her feel the assurance and benefit of his promises.

But next, we have his Age for our Security; which is the second proof, of the second Reason, why the Papists should look no further than a Toleration. This is the want of time I mention'd. They have but one Life in the Lease, and 'tis out of their power to renew, and this Life has liv'd fast too, and is got within seven of threescore; A greater Age than most of his Ancestors ever attained. Well, but he has an Army and many Officers of his own Religion. And if it be so, what can it do? It may suppress an insurrection, but upon the attempts we foolishly fear, they were hardly a Breakfast to the Quarters they live in. For if they were to get her, all the confines or remote parts of the Nation would rise like grails upon them, and if dispersed, to be sure they have not strength for such an Attempt,

But if they are insufficient, there is a potent Prince not far off can help the Design, who is not angry with Protestantism as some only. Suppose this, is there not as Potent Natural Powers to assist the constitution of the Kingdom from such Invasions? yes, and Land ones too. And as the Protestant Governments have more ships than the other, so an equal Land Force, when by such attempts to make Popery universal, they are awaken'd to the use of them: But certainly we must be very silly to think the King should suffer so great a shake to his own Interest as admitting an Army of Forraigners to enter his Kingdom on any pretence, must necessarily occasion. These *Bull-Beggars* and *Raw-Heads* and *Bloody-Bones*, are the Malice of some, and Weakness of others. But time, that informs Children, will tell the World the meaning of the Fright.

The third Proof of my second Reason, is the intestine Division among themselves. That Division, weakens a great Body, and renders a small one harmless, all will agree. Now that there is such a thing as Division among them is own talk. The *Seculars* and *Regulars* have ever been two Interests all the *Roman Church* over, and they are not only so here, but the *Regulars* differ among themselves. There is not a Coffee-house in Town, that does not freely tell us that the *Jesuites* and *Beneficentines* are at variance; that Count *Da Da* the Popes Nuncio & Bishop *Lyborn* dissent mightily from the Politicks of the first; Nay, the other day the Story was that they had prevail'd entirely over them. The Lords and Gentlemen of her communion have as warmly contested about the lengths they ought to go: *Moderation* seems to be the conclusion. Together they are little, and can do little; and divided, they are contemptible in stead of terrible.

Lastly; the *Roman Church* ought to be discreet, and think of nothing further than the entreated general Ease, because it would be an extrem that must beget another in the succeeding Reign. For as I can never think her so weak as well as base, that after all her Arguments for the *Jus Divinum* of Succession, she should, in the face of the World, attempt to violate it in the wrong of One of another Perswasion, (so that were an eternal loss of her with Mankind.) So if she does not, and yet is extravagant, she only rises higher to fall lower than all others in another Reign. This were provoking the

their own ruin. And to say true, either way would, as the second Letter has it, discredit her for ever and make true Prophets of those they had taken such pains to prove false witnesses. And supposing her to reckon upon the just Succession, nothing can recommend her, or continue her happiness in a Reign of another Judgement, but this Liberty equally maintained, that other persuasions, more numerous, for that reason as well as for their own sakes, are obliged to insure her. Here the Foundation is broad and strong, and what is built upon it, has the looks of long life. The Indenture will at least be, *quint-perse*, and parties are not so mortal as Men. And as this joyns, so it preserves Interest entire, which amounts to a *Religious Unity* and a *Civil Unity* at the worst.

Upon the whole matter, I advise the Members of the *Roman Communion* in this Kingdom, to be moderate, 'tis their duty and it belongs to all Men to see it and feel it from them, and it behoves them mightily they would; for the first part of this Discourse belongs to their *Hopes*, as well as to the Church of *Englands Fears*, viz. the *Duty and Spirit of Christianity*. Next, let them do good Offices between the King and his Excellent Children, for as that will be well taken by so affectionate a Father, so it gives the lie to their Enemies Suggestions, and recommends them to the Grace and Favour of the Successors. And having said this, I have said all that belongs to them in particular. There is left only my Address to the *Protestant Dissenters*, and a general conclusion to finish this Discourse.

Your case that are called *Protestant Dissenters*, differs mightily from that of the *Church of England and Rome*. For the first have the Laws for her, the last the Prince. Those Laws are against you, and she is not willing they should be Repeal'd: The Prince offers to be kind to you if you please; Your Interest, in this Conjunction is the *Question*. I think none ought to be made, that it is the *Liberty of Conscience*, desired, because you have much more need of it, having neither Laws nor Prince of your side, nor a Successor of any of your persuasions. The fears of Popery I know reach you; but it is to be remembered also, that if the Laws are not Repeal'd, there wants no new ones to destroy You, of the Papists making,

making, so that every fear you are taught to have of their
Repeal, is against your selves. Suppose your Apprehensi-
ons well grounded, you can but be Destroy'd; Which is
most comfortable for you to suffer by Law or without
it? The Church of England, by her Penal Laws, and the Do-
ctrine of Headship, has Armed that Religion (as it falls out) to
Destroy you. Nay, has made it a Duty in the King to do it,
from which (says she) nothing but an Act of Parliament can
absolve him, and that she is not willing to allow. And is it not
as reasonable that you should seek their Repeal, that if you
suffer from the Papists, It may be without human Law, as
well as against Christs Law, as for the Church of England to
keep them in force, because if she suffers, it shall be against
the Laws made to uphold her? For not repealing them, brings
you an inevitable mischief, and her, at most, but an uncertain
safety; tho' uncertain, she at the same time will Sacrifice you
to it. And yet if I were in her case, it would please me better
to remove Laws that might reproach me, and stop my Mouth
when turn'd against me, and be content, that if I Suffer for
my Religion, it is against the Law of God, Christianity, & the
Fundamentals of the old and true civil Government of my
Country, before such Laws help't to spoil it. In short, you
must either go to Church, or Meet, or let fall your Worshipping
of God in the way you believe. If the first, you are Hypocrites,
and give away the Cause, and reproach your dead Brethrens
Sincerity, and gratifie the old accusation of Schism, Ambi-
tion, &c. and finally loose the Hope and Reward of all your
Sufferings. If the second, viz. that you Meet against Law,
you run into the Mouth of the Government, whose Teeth are
to meet in you and Destroy you, as by Law established. If the
last, you deny your Faith, overthrow your own Argu-
ments, fall away from the Apostolical Doctrine of assem-
bling together, and to must fall into the Hands of God, and
under the troubles of your own Consciences and woundings
of his Spirit, of which 'tis said, *who can bear them*. So that
nothing is plainer than that Protestants Dissenters are not ob-
lig'd to govern themselves after such Church of England Mea-
sures, supposing her Fears and Jealousies better Bottom'd
than they are: For they are neither in this Kings time in the
same Condition with her, if the Penal Laws remain in force,

nor

not like to help, if she can help it, in the next design, if they are not Repeal'd in this; so that they are to be certainly Persecuted now, in hopes of an uncertain Liberty then. Uncertain both whether it will be in her Power, and whether she will do it if she be. The *Language of Fear and Assurance* are two things. *Affliction* promises what *Prosperity* rarely performs. Of this the promises made to introduce the late Kings Restoration, and the cancelling of the former Declaration, and what followed upon both are a plain proof. And tho' the last *Westminster Parliament* inclin'd to it, nobody so much oppos'd it as the *Clergy*, and the most Zealous Sons of that Church: And if they could or would not then see it to be reasonable, I can't see why one should trust to people so selfish and short sighted. But if she will stoop to all these Dissenting Interests that are Protestant, it must either be by a *comprehension*, and then she must part with her *Bishops*, her *common Prayer*, her *ceremonies*, and this it self is but *Presbyterianism*; (and she must go lower yet, if she will comprehend the rest) or, if not, she must Persecute or give this *Liberty of conscience* at last; which, that she will ever yield to uncompel'd, and a time too, when there is none to do it, while she refuses it under her present pressing Circumstances, I confess I cannot apprehend. But there is yet one Argument that can never fail to oblige your compliance with the General Ease entreated; viz: *That the Penal Laws are against our great Law of property, and so void in themselves*. This has been the Language of every *Apology*, and that which, to say true, is not to be answer'd: How then can you decline to help their Repeal, that in *Conscience*, *Reason* and *Law* you think void in their own Nature?

Lastly, There is nothing that can put you in a Condition to help your selves or the Church of England against the Domination of popery, but that which she weakly thinks the way to hurt you both, viz: *The Repeal of the Penal Laws*. For as you are, you are *tyed Hand and Foot*, you are not your own men, you can neither serve her nor your selves, you are fast in the Stocks of her Laws, and the course she would have you take, is to turn *Martyrs* under them to support them. If you like the *Bargain* you are the best natur'd people in the World; and something more. And since Begging is in Fashion,

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Fashion, I should desire no other *Bass*; for upon so plain a loss of your Wits, your Estates will of course fall astray to the Government, so that without the help of a Penal Law, you make an admirable Prize.

I have no mind to end so pleasantly with you. I have a sincere and Christian regard to you and yours. *Be not Conjur'd, nor Captions, at this Juncture.* I know some of you are told, if you lose this Liberty, *you Introduce Idolatry*, and for conscience sake you cannot do it. But that's a pure mistake, and improv'd I fear, by those that know it is so, which makes it the worse; for it is not introducing Idolatry (taking for granted that Popery is so) but saving the People from being Destroy'd that profess that Religion. If *Christ*, and his *apostles* had taken this course with the World, they must have killed them instead of *converting* them. 'Tis your mistake to think the *Jewish* rigorous Constitution is adequate to the *Christian* Dispensation; by no means: That one Conceit of *Judaizing Christianity* in our Politicks, has fill'd the World with Misery, of which this poor Kingdom has had its share. *Idolaters* are to be *Enlighten'd* and *Perswaded*, as *St. Paul* did the *Athenians* and *Romans*; and not *knock on the Head*; which mends nobody. And to say a *Christian* Magistrate is to do that, that a *Christian* can't do, is ridiculous; unless like the *Bishop of Munster*, who goes like a *Bishop* one part of the Day, and a *Souldier* the other, he is to be a *Christian in the Morning* and a *Magistrate in the Afternoon*. Besides, 'tis one thing to enact a Religion National, and compel Obedience to it (which would make this case abominable indeed) and another thing to take off unchristian Penalties for the sake of such mistakes, since that is to give them Power to hurt others, and this only to save you from being hurt for meer Religion.

To conclude my Address to you, of all People, it would look the most disingenious in you, and give you an Aire, the least Sensible, Charitable and Christian, not to endeavour such an Ease that have so much wanted it, and so often and so earnestly pressed it, even to Clamour. But that you should do it for their sakes who have used you so, and that the Instruments of their Cruelty, *the Penal Laws*, should from a common Grievance become a Darling to any among you, will be such a Reproach to your Understandings and Consciences,

that

that no Time or Argument can wipe off, and which I beseech
GOD and You to prevent.

The Conclusion,

I shall conclude with one Argument, that equally concerns
you all, and that is this; you claim the Character of *English
Men*. Now to be an *English Man*, in the sense of the Govern-
ment, is to be a *Freeman*, whether *Lord* or *Commoner*, to hold
his Liberry and Possessions by *Laws of his own consenting unto*,
and not to forfeit them upon Facts made Faults, by Humour,
Faction or partial Intèrest prevailing in the Governing part a-
gainst the Constitution of the Kingdom; but for Faults only,
that are such in the nature of civil Government; to wit, *Brea-
ches of those Laws that are made by the whole, in pursuance of com-
mon Right, for the good of the whole.*

This regard must at no time be neglected, or violated to-
wards any one Intèrest; for the moment we concede to such
a Breach upon our General Liberty, be it from an aversion
we carry to the Principles of those we expose, or some little
sinister and temporary Benefit of our own, we Sacrifice our
selves in the prejudices we draw upon others, or suffer them
to fall under; for our Intèrest in this respect is common. If
then as *English Men*, we are as mutually intèrested in the invio-
lable conservation of each others Civil Rights; as men em-
bark'd in the same Vessel are to save the Ship they are in for
their own sakes, we ought to Watch, Serve and Secure the
Intèrest of one another, because it is our own to do so; and
not by any means endure that to be done to please some nar-
row regard of any one party, *which may be drawn in Example
as some other turn of Power to our own utter Ruin.*

Had this Honest, Just, Wise and English Consideration
prevailed with our Ancestors of all Opinions from the days of
Richard the second, there had been less *Blood, Imprisonment,
Plunder, Beggary* for the Government of this Kingdom to
answer for. Shall I speak within our own knowledge, and
that without Offence, there has been Ruin'd, since the late
Kings Restoration, above *Fifteen Thousand Families*,
and more than *Five Thousand Persons* Dead under Bonds
for

for matters of *meer Conscience* to God: But who hath laid it to our Heart? It is high time now we should, especially when our King, with so much Grace and Goodness leads us the way.

I beseech you all, if you have any Reverence towards God, any Value for the Excellent Constitution of this Kingdom, any Tenderneſs for your Posterity and Love for your Selves, you would embrace this happy Conjunction, and pursue a common Expedient; That since we cannot agree to meet in one profession of Religion, we may entirely do it in this common civil Interest where we are all equally engaged; and therefore we ought for our own sakes to seek one anothers Security, that if we cannot be the Better, we may not be the Worse for our persuasions, in things, that bear no relation to them; and in which, it is impossible we should Suffer, and the Government escape, that is so much concern'd in the civil Support and prosperity of evry party and person that belongs to it.

Let us not therefore uphold *Penal-Laws* against any of our Religious Perswasions, nor make *Tests* out of each others Faiths, to exclude one another our civil Rights; for by the same Reason that denying *Transubstantiation*, is made One to exclude a *Papist*, to own it, may be made one to exclude a *Church of England-man*, a *Presbyterian*, an *Independant*, a *Quaker*, and *Anabaptist*: For the Question is not who is in the right in Opinion, but whether he is not in Practice *in the wrong*, that for such an Opinion deprives his Neighbour of his common Right? Now 'tis certain there is not one of any party that would willingly have a *Test* made out of his Belief, to abridge him of his native Priviledge; and therefore neither the Opinion of *Transubstantiation* in the *Papists*, *Episcopacy* in the *Church of England Man*, *Free-will* in the *Arminian*, *Predestination* in the *Presbyteriah*, *Particular churches* in the *Independent*, *Dipping of adults people* in the *Anabaptist*, nor *not-swearing* in the *Quaker*, ought to be made a *Test* of, to deprive him of the comforts of his Life, or render him incapable of the service of his Country, to which by a natural Obligation he is indebted, and from which, no Opinion can discharge him, and for that Reason, much less should any other Party think it fit, or in their power to exclude him.

And indeed it were ridiculous to talk of giving Liberty of

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Conscience (which yet few have now the fore-head to oppose) and at the same time imagine those *Tests* that do exclude men that Service and Reward, ought to be continued: For though it does not immediately concern me, being neither *Officer* nor *Papist*, yet the Consequence is general, and every party, even the Church of England, will find her self concern'd upon reflection; For she cannot assure her self it may not come to be her turn.

But, Is it not an odd thing, that by leaving them on foot, every Body shall have Liberty of Conscience *but the Government*? for while a man is out of Office, he is *Test* free, but the hour he is chosen to any station, be it in the *Legislation* or *Administration*, he must *wire-draw* his Conscience to hold it, or be excluded with the Brand of Dissent: And can this be equal or wise? Is this the way to employ men for the good of the publick, where *Opinion prevails above virtue*, and *Abilities are submitted to the humour of a party*; surely none can think this a cure for Division, or that Animosities are like to be prevented by the only ways in the World that beget and heighten them. Nor is it possible that the ease that should be granted can continue long when the party in whose favour they are not repeal'd, may thereby be enabled to turn the point of the sword again upon Dissenters.

I know *Holland* is given in Objection to this extent of freedom, where only *one Perswasion has the Government*, tho the rest their Liberty: But they don't consider, first, *how much more Holland is under the power of Necessity than we are*. Next, *That our constitutions differ greatly*. For the first, 'tis plain, in the little compass they live in; the uncertainty and precariousness of the means of their subsistence: That as they are in more danger of Drowning, so neerer ruin by any Commotion in the State, than other Countries are. *Trading* is their support: *This*, keeps them busy, *That*, makes them Rich; and *Wealth*, naturally gives them caution of the disorders that may spoil them of it. This makes the governing party wary how they use their power, and the other Interests tender how they resist it; they have reason to fear a publick Desolation; since *Holland* has not a natural and Domestick Fund to rely upon, or return to from such National Disorders.

The next Consideration is as clear and cogent, *our constitutions*

situations differ mightily. For though they have the Name of a *Republick*, yet in their choice, in order to the Legislature, they are much less free then we are: And since the *Free-holders* of all Parties in *England* may Elect, which in *Holland* they can no more do than they can be chosen, there is good reason why all may be elected to serve their King and Country here, that in *Holland* cannot be chosen or serve. And if our Power to chuse be larger than theirs in *Holland*, we are certainly then a freer People, and so ought not to be confin'd, as they are about what person it is that must be chosen: Methinks it bears no proportion, and therefore the Instance and Objection are in proper to our purpose.

But it is said by some, *That there cannot be two predominant Religions, and if the Church of England be not that, Popery by the Kings Favour is like to be so*. It is certain that two predominant Religions, would be two Uppermosts at once, which is nonsense every where: But as I cannot see what need there is for the Church of *England* to lose her Churches or Revenues, so while she has them, Believe me, she is predominant in the thing of the World that lies nearest her Guides. But if I were to speak my inclination, I cannot apprehend the necessity of any *Predominant* Religion, understanding the word with *Penal Laws* in the tale of it: The Mischief of it, in a Country of so many powerful Interests as this; I can easily understand, having had the opportunity of seeing and feeling it too: And because nothing can keep up the Ball of Vengeance like such a *Predominant* Religion, and that *Penal Laws* and *Tests* are the means of the Domination, I, for that reason, think them fit to be Repeal'd, and let English Mankind say
A M E N.

I do not love Quibling, but 'tis true, to a Lamentation, that there is little of the *power of Religion* seen where there is such a predominant one, unless among those it Domineers over.

I conclude, they that are so predominant, and they that seek to be so (be they who they will) move by the same Spirit and Principle, and however differing their Pretentions and Ends may be, the odds are very little to me, by which it is must certainly be Opprest.

Dare we then do (for once) *as we would be done by*, and show the World, we are not Religious without Justice, nor
 Christians

Christians without charity: That *False self* shall not govern us
against *True self*; nor *opportunity* make us Thieves, to our
Neighbours for Gods sake? the end of *resting and Persevering*
under every Revolution of Government. If this we can find
in our Hearts to do, and yet as Men, and as Christians, as
English Men, we do but do our Duty, let the *Penal Laws*
and *Teste* be Repeal'd; and in order to it, *Let us now take*
those measures of men and things, that may give our Wishes
and Endeavours the best success for the publick good, that
our posterity may have more reason to bless our Memories
for their *Freedom and Security*, than for their *Nature and*
Tolerance.

F I N I S
